

COVID-19

Welcome back to Marischal College – A Guide for Returning Employees

Version 1.5

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This document is uncontrolled when printed.

Version History

Version	Version Date	Summary of changes
1.0	15 June 2020	First draft
1.1	22 June 2020	Update following consultation/feedback
1.2	12 August 2020	Update following change to Scottish Government regulations on wearing face coverings in certain indoor public places
1.3	19 October 2020	Update following change to Scottish Government regulations on wearing face coverings in the workplace
1.4	22 October 2020	Update following reopening of 2 nd floor South
1.5	01 February 2021	Update following closure of LG West and North wings for PS building integration works

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1. Introduction

The Scottish Government [route map through and out of the COVID-19 crisis](#) was published on 21 May and provided an indication of the order in which restrictions would be carefully and gradually lifted across four phases. On 28 May, it was confirmed that sufficient progress in suppressing the virus had been sustained to enable the country to move from lockdown to Phase 1. Continued progress in suppression of the virus has been made which has allowed further transition to Phase 2 and, on the 10th July, to Phase 3.

In advance of the expected easing of lockdown, Aberdeen City Council established a Service Reinstatement Working Group, which considers requests from Chief Officers to restart services which had been temporarily stood down during the lockdown phase. As part of the Working Group's considerations, the requesting service's need for access to properties was considered, the group needing to be comfortable that the property was in a suitable condition where continued observing of social distancing and effective hygiene could be demonstrated, to ensure employee safety. In addition to ensure that support services such as Facilities Management were able to provide ongoing service within the property to be used.

This document sets out the work that has been done within your place of work to ensure that the property is compliant, gives some reminders to you about the importance of social distancing, hand hygiene, etc. and what you need to do if you experience COVID-19 symptoms.

Managers should use this document as an induction tool for all employees who will return to the office as we work through the phases through and out of lock down. Before going into detail of the changes made within the office and how employees will be expected to work within those changes, the initial pages cover the precautions we all still need to take to minimise our risk of contracting the virus, a reminder of the most common symptoms and information on the Scottish Government's 'Test and Protect' strategy.

Key Messages

- Everyone who can do their job from home must continue to do so
- Staff are key to the success of measures put in place
- It will be a gradual return of staff to Marischal College managed through the Service Reinstatement Gateway Process
- Service Managers play a key role in managing staff movement, reducing busy periods and keeping staff movement to the absolute minimum
- Measures put in place will be regularly reviewed, as a minimum in line with Scottish Government review periods
- Enhanced cleaning will be provided but this also requires staff to take responsibility for desk cleaning and keeping desks clear in line with office working risk assessments

2. **COVID-19**

2.1. **Precautions**

All individual staff members should ensure that they carry out the following steps when working within Council Offices:

- *Wash hands regularly with soap and water; or use alcohol hand sanitizer where available before eating and drinking, and after coughing, sneezing and going to the toilet.*
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.*
- *Wherever possible, avoid direct contact with people that have a respiratory illness and avoid using their personal items such as their mobile phone.*
- *Make your own tea, coffee, cold drinks, etc. And do not share cups, glasses, crockery and cutlery with colleagues.*
- *Follow the stay at home guidance if you or someone in your household has symptoms of COVID-19.*
- *Cover the nose and mouth with a disposable tissue when sneezing, coughing, wiping and blowing the nose. Dispose of all used tissues promptly into a waste bin. Then wash your hands or if facilities are not available use 60% alcohol-based hand rub. If there are no tissues available, cough and sneeze into the crook of the elbow.*
- *Separation distances of a minimum of 2 metres between people should be maintained and direct person to person contact such as shaking hands should be avoided.*

2.2. **Symptoms**

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are the recent onset of any of the following:

- *a new continuous cough*
- *a high temperature*
- *a loss of, or change in your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)*

For most people COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you should not come into the office, should self-isolate at home and must submit yourself for testing.

2.3. **Testing**

Test and Protect is Scotland's approach to implementing the test, trace, isolate, support strategy, it is a public health measure designed to break chains of transmission of COVID-19 in the community. Full details can be found [here](#).

The NHS will test people who have symptoms, trace people who may have become infected by spending time in close contact with someone who tests positive, and then support those close contacts to self-isolate. That means if they have the virus they are less likely to pass it on to others.

Anyone with symptoms must now request a test. Those who test positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by NHS contact tracers who will interview them and get in touch with people they have been in close contact with, to tell them they must self-isolate for 14 days. Test & Protect is now available for all Aberdeen City Council Employees and not just those deemed as critical workers.

*If any ACC employee is informed by a contact tracer that they should isolate, management should assist them to do so straight away. They may feel well, as the virus could still be incubating when they are asked to isolate. Some people who are asked to isolate may not become unwell, but they **must** stay at home and self-isolate for the full 14 days. Staff can work from home if they are able to and they are not unwell.*

Please remember anyone who has symptoms or a member of the same household, must request a test, please complete this [online form](#).

Please note NHS contact tracers may require someone to self-isolate more than once and even if they have previously tested positive for coronavirus and have recovered.

Further information on self-isolation can be found on Aberdeen City Council's [Self-isolation](#) pages.

Note: *Aberdeen City Council's guidance on COVID-19 is regularly updated and you should keep yourself informed on current guidance which is available for all employees [here](#)*

3. **Building Operation**

3.1. **Opening Times**

The building opening times have not changed. Although, the Customer Service Centre continues to operate with reduced opening hours. Staggered start and finish times will help reduce social interactions between staff in corridors, stair ways and within the car parks. To facilitate this your Manager may ask you to arrive and leave within specific time windows as set out below.

- *Start before 8:30am, or*
- *Start after 8:30am*

- *Finish before 5pm, or*
- *Finish after 5pm*

3.2. **Fixed Teams/Partnering/Cohorting**

To further reduce staff interactions and allow effective infection tracking your Cluster may put in place measures such as Fixed Teams, Partnering and Cohorting.

3.3. **Wearing of Face Coverings**

On 15 October 2020, Scottish Government announced a further update to regulations which from Monday 19 October 2020, make wearing a face covering mandatory in indoor communal areas and canteens within the workplace. Communal areas have been defined in the regulations as areas where persons mingle or gather, such as –

- *passageways/corridors,*
- *stairs,*
- *lifts,*
- *staff rooms,*
- *training rooms,*
- *changing rooms, or*
- *entrances*

Signage will be installed throughout Marischal College to advise all employees and visitors to the building that they must wear a face covering at all times, except when they are working at a

desk, table or other workspace. An example of the sign advising of this requirement can be seen below:



There are still exemptions from wearing face coverings and you can read what those are within the guidance at the following link:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/face-coverings/#exemptions>

4. Entering the building

To manage the flow of people into and out of Marischal College, we require staff to only use the Queen Street and Littlejohn Street staff entrances/exits. There is limited Customer Service activity taking place at the Customer Service Centre, with the Filter reception still currently closed. The Broad Street entrance/exit is for use by customers only and will remain so until further notice is given.

On your arrival at the Queen Street or Littlejohn Street entrances, you will be met with an information board which gives a visual indication of the areas within the building which are available for staff to work within:

ALL STAFF NOTICE

Please be advised that due to the COVID-19 crisis, only certain areas within Marischal College are accessible for staff to work within. You must only use desk spaces, kitchen areas and toilets in the areas highlighted in green below and must observe social distancing at all times:

- . All of 4th floor **CLOSED**
- . 3rd floor West wing **OPEN** / 3rd floor North wing **partially OPEN *** / 3rd floor South wing **partially OPEN ***
- . 2nd floor Directors Hub and 2nd floor West wing **OPEN** / 2nd floor North wing **partially OPEN *** / 2nd floor South wing **OPEN**
- . 1st floor North and South wings **OPEN** / 1st floor West wing **CLOSED**
- . Ground floor North wing **CLOSED** / CSC **OPEN** for reduced hours / Ground floor South wing **OPEN**
- . Lower Ground floor West and North wings **CLOSED** (for Police Scotland building integration works) / Lower Ground floor cafeteria **OPEN**

* Only for specific desks allocated to services which have been subject to approval from the Service Reinstatement Working Group

Thank you for your co-operation.

You will also see signage which advises you that you should immediately proceed to a washroom to wash your hands or alternatively, to sanitise your hands using the provided hand sanitiser.

UPON ENTERING THIS BUILDING, WE NEED YOU TO

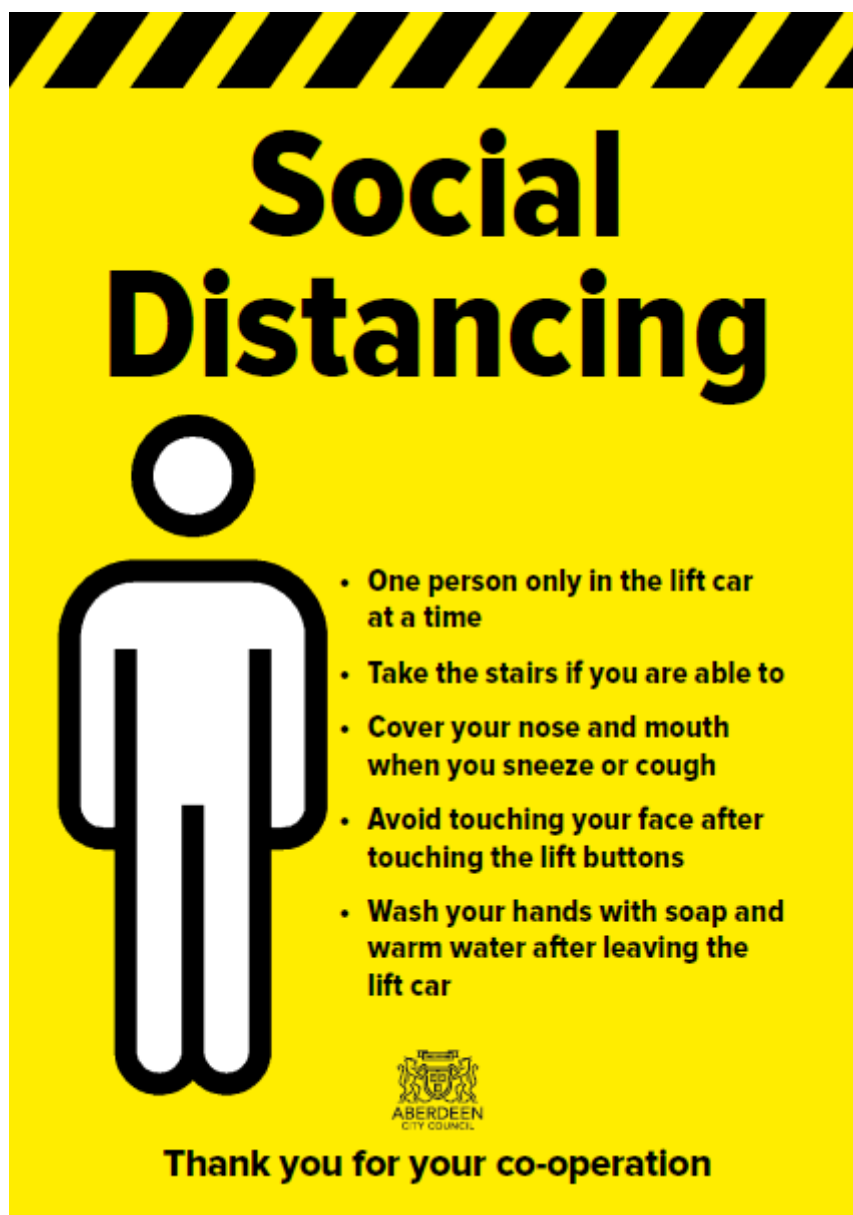


- Please proceed directly to a toilet and use soap and warm water to wash your hands
- Completely cover your hands in soapy water and wash for 20 seconds
- Alternatively, please use the hand sanitiser provided to sanitise your hands
- Remember to always wash your hands before you eat, after you have used the toilet and after touching lift buttons, docucentre buttons, etc.
- Keep your hands away from your face, eyes, nose and mouth
- Your actions will help to keep you and your colleagues safe.

Please note that some floors/wings have been temporarily closed, including the toilets and kitchens in those areas. Closed floors/wings can still be accessed for the collection of mail, files and equipment. However, the workstations should not be used and staff should not base themselves there.

5. Use of passenger lifts

Lift cars are a confined space where it is impossible to observe 2 metre social distancing. As such, we have had to restrict the numbers of persons within a lift car at any time to just one. You will see signage on the approach to lifts and within the lift cars advising of this. For those who are able, the preference is that you would avoid using the lift and take the stairs to reach the floor you wish to get to. See next section below.

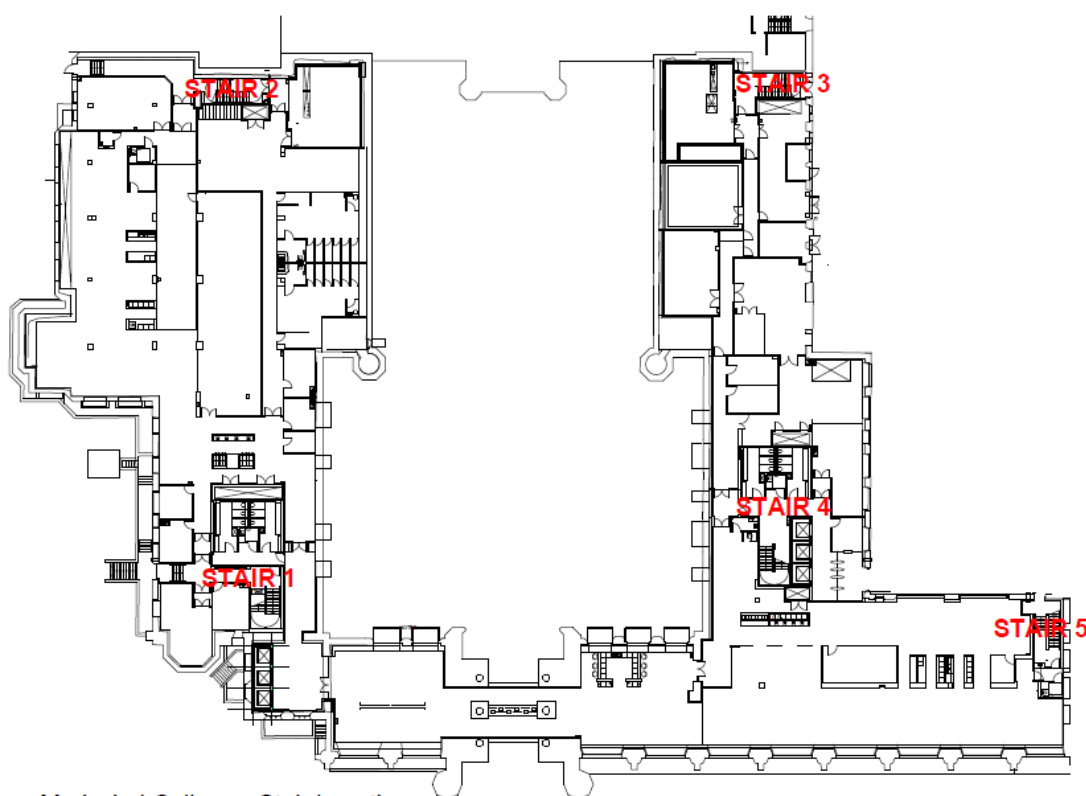


6. Moving around the building

6.1. Use of Stairs

The two main stairwells in Marischal College (stairs 1 and 4), those which are accessed at the side of the passenger lifts on North and South wings, are suitably wide enough to allow colleagues to travel both upwards and downwards, but to ensure that colleagues are maintaining physical distance between each other, we are installing a 'keep left' principle. This principle should also be followed whilst travelling through any corridor or other space within the building where no one-way system has been put in place.

The 3 other stairwells (stairs 2, 3 and 5) should be used for emergency egress from the building only.



Marischal College - Stair Locations

6.2. One-way systems

When exiting the stairs into the toilet foyers off of stairs 1 and 4, you will see directional arrows which will direct you to turn left. Turning right will see you met with a sign advising you that there is no exit through this door.



NO EXIT

**TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYEE SAFETY, A
ONE-WAY SYSTEM IS IN OPERATION**

Similarly, when attempting to enter the toilet foyers to visit the toilets or to access the stairwells from the wrong side, you will be met with a sign advising you that there is no entry through this door.



Note: *this one-way system should be adhered to at all times, except in the event of an emergency evacuation, where users should exit the building as quickly as possible using their nearest available safe fire exit route.*

7. Toilets

To ensure that social distancing can be observed within the main toilets throughout the building, we are implementing a simple system to ensure that only one person is in each toilet at a time. A cone has been placed outside each toilet door, the cone is to be used as the visual indicator of whether a toilet is vacant or engaged. The cone will sit to the side of the door frame to indicate that the toilet is vacant and available for use, as shown in the figure below.



Before entering the toilet, you should slide the cone using your foot into the middle of the door frame (immediately outside of the toilet door) to indicate the toilet is now engaged.



After using the toilet, you should wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds, following the NHS hand washing technique displayed on posters inside the toilet, dry your hands with single-use paper towel and exit the toilet, pushing the cone back using your foot to the original position to the side of the door frame to indicate the toilet is now available for use by another staff member.

The accessible toilets have always been available for use by only one person, so remain unchanged.

8. Workstations

8.1. Desk in use/not in use

To ensure that social distancing is being observed by all who are working at workstations within the building, each desk has been marked to indicate whether it is available to be used or is not available to be used. Examples of the signs you will see at desks are included below:



DESK IN USE

**TO ENABLE SAFE SOCIAL DISTANCING,
THIS DESK HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FOR USE**



DESK NOT IN USE

**TO ENABLE SAFE SOCIAL DISTANCING,
THIS DESK IS UNAVAILABLE FOR USE**



8.2. Allocation of desks

Staff Already Working in Building - Your Cluster will have plans of the desks that are currently available for use and will have considered how to allocate these to staff. You may be asked to move an alternative workstation as indicated by your Manager.

Staff Returning to Existing Work Areas – Your Cluster will have plans of the desks that are currently available for use and will have considered how to allocate these to staff.

Staff Returning to Alternative Areas – 2 West is being used for staff who can't return to their usual work areas due to temporary closures. In this case Corporate Landlord will allocate desks to specific staff.

8.3. Cleaning of desks

Cleaning Services will undertake daily cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces (except IT kit) at workstations where the clear desk policy is being adhered to. In addition to this, we each need to take responsibility to ensure that the desks we are working from and the IT kit (keyboard, mouse, telephone, etc.) which sits upon these desks are disinfected between uses. Disinfectant cleaning spray and paper wipe will be available for users at each kitchen area on the floors which are in use throughout the building to clean desk surfaces and IT kit both before and after each use. Instructions on the safe and effective use of these products will be available with the products.

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to clean their workstation on arrival and departure. It is good practice to also clean the desk at other times e.g. before eating/drinking. Desks should be cleaned using the following method:-

- Prior to use ensure surface is clean and dry removing any marks and debris using the cleaning materials provided*
- Dry off with disposable paper towel if necessary. Dispose of in waste after use*
- Apply disinfectant, spray evenly to surfaces, allow to air dry*
- If surfaces dries within 5 minutes, reapply*
- Perform hand hygiene after completion*

9. Locker/Cloakroom Areas

To ensure that social distancing is being observed within the locker/cloakroom areas throughout the building, we are restricting access to these areas to one person at a time. An example of the sign advising users of this principle can be seen below:



10. Kitchen Areas

To ensure that social distancing is being observed within the kitchen areas throughout the building, we are restricting access to these areas to one person at a time. The majority of kitchens will have an entry/exit point with a waiting spot marked on the floor. An example of the sign advising users of this principle can be seen below:



11. Business Hubs

To ensure that social distancing is being observed within Business Hubs throughout the building, we are restricting access to these areas to one person at a time. The majority of Business Hubs will have an entry/exit point with a waiting spot marked on the floor. An example of the sign advising users of this principle can be seen below:



12. Meeting Rooms

12.1. Large meeting rooms

The large meeting rooms in the building have temporarily been taken out of use. Meetings should continue to be held over Microsoft Teams or by other virtual means unless it is absolutely essential to have face to face meetings. If face to face meetings are required Clusters should have this covered within their service COVID-19 Risk Assessments.



12.2. Small meeting rooms

Most smaller meeting rooms have been left available for use but are to be used by either a single person or 2 people as indicated. The rooms should be used for Teams meetings, etc. where a higher degree of privacy is required. A disinfectant cleaning spray and paper wipe will be available within the room for users to clean the table surface, chair arms, etc. before and after each use, along with guidance on the safe and effective use of these products. The room booking system should not be used at this time.



12.3. Informal meeting spaces

Most Informal meeting spaces throughout the building have been removed, had furniture pushed together or been sectioned off with hazard tape to indicate that they are not to be used. Some informal spaces are still accessible, but capacity of these spaces has been reduced to single person use only.

12.4. Isolation Areas

In the event that you or a colleague become unwell with Covid-19 symptoms whilst at work, you/they should:

- go home as soon as you/they notice symptoms and follow the [Stay at Home Guidance](#) and self-isolate for 10 days minimum.*
- You/they should note that any household members will be required to self-isolate for 14 days from this point.*
- Where possible you/they should minimise contact with others i.e. use a private vehicle to go home. If it is not possible to use private transport, then you/they should be advised to return quickly and directly home.*
- If possible, a household member could pick you/them up; the whole household will need to self-isolate for the required period.*
- If you/they have to use public transport, you/they should try to keep away from other people and catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue. If you/they don't have any tissues available, you/they should cough and sneeze into the crook of your/their elbow.*

If you/they are so unwell that you/they require an ambulance you should:

- phone 999 and let the call handler know you are concerned about COVID-19.*
- Whilst you wait for advice or an ambulance to arrive, the nearest available small meeting room can become an isolation area for the unwell person to sit and be isolated from others. If another employee has to remain with them then they should wait outside of the meeting room, remaining a minimum of 2 metres away from the unwell person.*

Once the unwell person has left the premises, the [Cleaning Services Management Team](#) should be contacted to arrange for disinfection of the workstation that the unwell person had been working from and of the isolation area if one had been used.

13. Bike Racks and Changing Areas

With the restricted availability of public transport and reduced capacity of vehicles, walking, running or wheeling to work is being actively encouraged. The entrance to and the layout within the bike rack area in Marischal College make it impossible to install a one-way system. We ask users to show patience if another user is placing their bike within the bay they need to access and wait until that user has vacated the bay before entering.



The reduced numbers of people working within the building should mean that there are limited numbers of people accessing the changing facilities simultaneously. We respectfully ask that only three users are in each of the male and female changing rooms at any given time, that whilst in the changing areas these users are spaced appropriately to ensure social distancing is being observed and that all clothing, towels, gym bags, etc. are removed from the area to ensure that effective cleaning and disinfection of the area is able to be undertaken daily.

14. Fire Safety

Facilities Management will have a staff presence in the building between 08:00 and 16:00, Monday to Friday and will manage emergency evacuations as normal. The Emergency Evacuation muster point remains at Arts Centre, the reduced numbers of staff working within the building will mean that social distancing can be effectively observed whilst at the muster point.

The one-way systems which has been put in place in the toilet foyers at stairs 1 and 4 should be ignored in the event of an emergency evacuation, users should exit the building as quickly as possible using their nearest available safe fire exit route.

The weekly fire alarm test will continue to be undertaken at 10:00 each Tuesday morning.

15. Breaks

15.1. Morning and lunch breaks

As with start and finish times, you may be asked to take morning and lunch breaks during specific periods. Lunch breaks will be required to be taken between 12-1pm and 1-2pm. You are encouraged to bring your own lunch to work with you and to eat this at your workstation.

15.2. Access to lower ground floor canteen

The Canteen remains open. Furniture has been reconfigured for single users with 2m social distancing in place. Tables must be cleaned before and after use, with the cleaning materials available. Microwaves and vending machines are in use, with user guidance in place.

16. Car Parking

Reverse only parking applies in all parking areas. Exceptions can be made if this makes access/egress difficult for those with a disability. Please be aware of other car park users and maintain social distancing at all times.

17. Mail

Business mail is still being delivered to and collected from the Distribution hub on the Lower Ground floor, South wing. Building Assistants continue to deliver mail to and collect mail from the business hubs in operation once per day.

You should not arrange for personal deliveries to be made to Marischal College.

18. Visitors

Visitors should only be invited to the building if absolutely essential. As the Filter Reception is currently closed staff should make arrangements with their visitor for gaining access to the building. During the visit staff should ensure that their visitor is following the same hand hygiene, cough/sneeze etiquette and social distancing requirements expected of our employees.

19. Managers Checklist

Managers should consider the following for both staff already in the building and staff returning to the building.

- *Has the risk assessment for the Team been updated to reflect Covid measures in place.*
- *Has approval from the SRWG been given for staff coming back into the office.*
- *Has the staff member read this 'Welcome Back' guide.*
- *Has the importance of individual hygiene measures been reinforced.*
- *Has the employee been made aware where their work area is.*
- *Has the employee been allocated a specific work station (if relevant).*
- *Has the employee been advised which days/weeks they should be based in the office.*
- *Has the employee been advised of any Fixed Teams, Partnering or Cohorting arrangements.*
- *Has the employee been given a time window for starting work. 50% of staff must start before 8:30am and 50% of staff should start after 8:30am.*
- *Has the employee been given a time window for finishing work. 50% of staff must finish before 5pm and 50% of staff should finish after 5pm.*
- *Has the employee been allocated a time to take lunch. 50% of staff to take lunch between 12pm to 1pm and 50% of staff to take lunch between 1pm to 2pm.*

20. Useful Links

- [Aberdeen City Council 'COVID-19 Advice' Intranet pages](#)
- [Scottish Government Route map through and out of the COVID-19 crisis](#)
- [Scottish Government Test, Trace, Isolate and Support strategy](#)
- [Health Protection Scotland COVID-19 Information and Guidance for General \(Non-Healthcare\) Settings](#)
- [Health & Safety Executive: Talking with your workers about preventing coronavirus](#)